AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1.   (currently amended)   A ~~networked~~ system that provides for the ~~distributed~~ management and processing of ~~one or more~~ print jobs without the use of a print server ~~within a networked computer environment~~, the system comprising:

a network;

a plurality of client computer devices connected to the network, wherein the plurality of client computer devices are configured to participate in bi-directional communication across the network, and wherein each client computer device includes a local print queue and a local print queue manager, wherein the local print queue manager is one of (i) a spooler, (ii) a print processor, and (iii) a print assist in a local print subsystem of the corresponding client computer device;

a printing device for processing a print job initiated at one of the plurality of client computer devices, wherein the printing device is connected to the network and corresponds to the print queues of the client computer devices;

a broadcast message sent from a print queue manager of a first client computer device to a second client computer device across the network, wherein the first and second client computer devices are of the plurality of computer devices, ~~and wherein at least one of the first and second client computer devices participates in a centralized management of the print job~~.

2.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message indicates an intent of the first client computer device to participate in a distributed management of a print job.

3.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message indicates an intent to despool print data to the printing device.

4.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message indicates an intent to set a status for the print job.

5.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message indicates an intent to get a current status for the print job.

6.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message indicates an intent to set a status on the printing device.

7.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message indicates an intent to get a current status for the printing device.

8.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message provides a request for print queue information.

9.   (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message provides a request for a print queue change.

10. (currently amended) A system as recited in claim 1, wherein the broadcast message provides a request for administrative authority.

11. (cancelled)

12.   (currently amended) In a system that includes a plurality of one or more client computer devices connected to a printing device via a network, a method for managing and processing a print job without any use of a print server, the method comprising the steps for:

initiating a first print job at a first client computer device;

spooling the print job from a printer driver to a spooler, wherein the printer driver and the spooler are local to the client computer device;

placing the print job on a print queue that is local to the client computer device;

locally managing the print job until print data of the print job is despooled to the printing device, said managing the print job including transmitting a first broadcasting a message relating to the print job across the network from the first client computer device to a second one or more other client computer devices, wherein the first broadcast indicates an intent to despool print data to the printing device that corresponds to the first print job; and receiving a first response to the first broadcast message from the second client computer device; and

despooling the print data corresponding to the first print job directly from the first client computer device to the printing device to process the first print job; and

updating the local print queue.

13.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the step for said initiating a print job includes the step for determining whether to perform cluster printing, and wherein if the cluster printing is to be performed, utilizing the printing device in performing the cluster printing.

14.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein ~~the step for~~ said initiating _a print job_ includes ~~the step for~~ determining whether to perform intelligent routing, and wherein if the intelligent routing is to be performed, utilizing the printing device in performing the intelligent routing.

15.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein ~~the step for~~ said receiving _a response_ includes ~~the step for~~ determining whether the ~~first~~ response includes a conflict for despooling the print data to the printing device, and wherein if the conflict is included in the first response, ~~performing the step for~~ resolving the conflict.

16.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein ~~the step for~~ said receiving _a response_ includes ~~the step for~~ determining whether the first response includes an objection to despooling the print data to the printing device, and wherein if the objection is included in the first response, ~~performing the step for~~ resolving the objection.

17.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein ~~the step for~~ said receiving _a response_ includes receiving no response from _any of_ the ~~second~~ _other_ client computer device_s_.

18.   (cancelled)

19.   (cancelled)

20. (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the print job is a first print job, and wherein ~~prior to performing~~ said locally managing the first print job further comprises ~~the step for transmitting the first broadcast, performing the steps for~~:

receiving a broadcast from a second client computer device relating to ~~initiating~~ a second print job that was initiated at ~~a third~~ the second client computer device and is to be rendered on the printing device from the second client computer device; and

ordering the first print job ~~broadcast~~ and ~~the~~ a second print job ~~broadcast~~ on ~~a~~ the local print queue~~; and managing the queue~~.

21. (currently amended) A method as recited in claim ~~20~~12, wherein ~~the step for~~ said locally managing the print job is performed by at least one of:

(i)   a print driver; ~~and~~

(ii)   a print assistant; and

(iii)   the spooler.

22. (cancelled)

23. (cancelled)

24. (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein ~~the step for~~ said despooling the print data further includes ~~the steps for: updating one or more print queues; and~~ setting a status of the ~~first~~ print job on the local print queue.

25.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 24, wherein the step for despooling the print data further includes ~~the steps for:removing the first print job from one or more local print queues; and~~ removing a remote entry of the ~~first~~ print job from a remote print queue.

26.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 25, wherein if the print data corresponding to the ~~first~~ print job is in a printer ready format, the step for despooling the print data further includes ~~the step for~~ using a print processor to send the print data to a port manager.

27.   (currently amended) A method as recited in claim 25, wherein if the print data corresponding to the ~~first~~ print job is in a journaled format, the step for despooling the print data further includes ~~the steps for~~:

        using a print processor to play back the journaled data to a printer driver;

        spooling the print data to a spooler; and

        sending the print data to a port manager.

28.   (currently amended) A computer program product for implementing within a networked computer system a method for <u>managing and</u> processing a print job <u>without any use of a print server</u>, the computer program product comprising:

computer readable medium for providing computer program code means utilized to implement the method, wherein the computer program code means is comprised of executable code for implementing the steps for:

<u>initiating a print job at a client computer device;</u>

<u>placing the print job on a print queue that is local to the client computer device;</u>

<u>locally managing the print job until print data of the print job is despoiled to a printing device, said managing the print job including</u> ~~transmitting a~~ <u>broadcast</u>ing <u>a message relating to the print job</u> across a network from ~~a first~~ <u>the</u> client computer device to ~~a second~~ <u>one or more other</u> client computer device<u>s</u>, ~~wherein the broadcast indicates an intent to despool print data corresponding to a print job to a printing device;~~

~~receiving a response to the broadcast from the second client computer device; and~~

despooling the print data ~~directly~~ from the ~~first~~ client computer device to the printing device to process the print job<u>; and</u>

<u>updating the local print queue.</u>

29. (currently amended) A computer program product as recited in claim 28, wherein said managing the print job further comprises the step for receiving a response to the broadcast message, said receiving a response comprisingincludes the steps for:

determining whether the response includes a conflict from the client computer device to despool the print data to the printing device, wherein if the conflict is included in the response, resolving the conflict; and

determining whether the response includes an objection from the client computer device to despool the print data to the printing device, wherein if the objection is included in the response, resolving the objection.

30. (cancelled)

31. (cancelled)

32. (cancelled)

33. (new) A computer program product as recited in claim 28, wherein the broadcast message is used to perform at least one of:

    (i)   registering a client computer device in a distributed management of print jobs;

    (ii)   indicating an intent to despool the print job;

    (iii)   setting a status of a despooled print job;

    (iv)   obtaining a status of a despooled print job;

(v)   setting a status of the printing device;

(vi)   obtaining a status of the printing device;

(vii)   requesting print queue information; and

(viii)   requesting a print queue change.

34.   (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the broadcast message is used to register a client computer device in a distributed management of print jobs.

35.   (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the broadcast message is used to indicate an intent to despool the print job.

36.   (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the broadcast message is used to set or check a status of a despooled print job.

37.   (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the broadcast message is used to set or get a status of the printing device.

38.   (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the broadcast message is used to request print queue information.

39.   (new) A method as recited in claim 12, wherein the broadcast message is used to request a print queue change.